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party to present a pig. The pig is supposed to be sacrificed to a goddess, *Ka 'ki synshar*, i.e. the goddess of the State, but it is invariably eaten by the Siem and the members of the durbar. The Siem then calls out "*Lamin ma khyrwa*" (is it not so, young people?) The members of the durbar then reply, "*Iawid lamin khnia khyrwa*" (yes, it is so, young ones). Sentences of fine are more often converted to those other punishments nowadays, probably because very few of the Siems possess jails for the reception of criminals. The condemned one in a criminal case frequently serves his time by working for the Siem as a menial servant. The above description, which is based on the account given by the Rev. W. Lewis, with some modifications, may be taken as the usual form of procedure of the Khasi durbar.

Under the heading of decision of disputes we may perhaps give a short description of some of the punishments which were inflicted by the Siems and their durbars in criminal cases in ancient times. Murder was punishable by beating the culprit to death with clubs (*ki tongsa ki kynthei*). The killing, however, of a *wong shah sah*, i.e. a man who seeks for human victims to sacrifice to the monster, a *thlen*, is not considered murder, even now by the Khasis, and the slayer of the *wong shah sah* only has to inform the Siem and deposit Rs. 5, and one pig in the Siem's court. The slaying of a robber also is dealt with in like manner.

The punishment of adultery was imprisonment for life (*ka sah daiu mar*), or a fine of Rs. 1,100, and one pig (*ka khadawi spah wei shah*). Whether such a heavy fine was ever paid is perhaps doubtful, and probably some other form of punishment was substituted for it. A husband finding his wife and a man in *flagrante delicto* could, as under the law of the ancients, kill both adulterer and adulteress without punishment for murder. He was, however, bound to deposit Rs. 5, and the conventional pig in the Siem's durbar. The punishment for rape (*kaba khaiad lyngo*) was imprisonment for life in the case of the woman being married, and a heavy fine and one pig if the woman was a spinster. Arson was punishable with imprisonment for life, or a heavy fine. The punishment for causing people to be possessed by devils (*ka ka ai-dwaid briew*) was

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683 exile (*pyrsaplong pur*); but if a person so [illegible] died, the
685 survivor was hurled down a precipice (*pyrsuk khoopyung*). The punishment for robbery and theft was the sticks (*ka pyrdeit duongong*), the imposition of fetters, or a punishment known as *kata ri'ang sohmynken*, by which the culprit was compelled to sit on a bamboo platform under which chillies were burnt. The result of such torture can be better imagined than described.

684 Incest, or sang, which, amongst the Khasis means cohabiting
686 with a member of a man's or woman's own clan, was punishable with exile or a fine of Rs. 500/- and one pig. It is believed by the Khasis that the evils resultant from incestuous connection are very great; the following are some of them: being struck by lightning, being killed by a tiger, dying in childbirth, &c.

METHODS OF TRIAL BY ORDEAL.

1.—*Water Ordeal.*

685 In ancient times the Khasis used to decide certain cases by means of water ordeal (*ka ryoo wah*). Tele, writing in 1844, mentions a water ordeal, and one of my Khasi friends remembers to have seen one during his boyhood. There were two kinds of such ordeals. The first, called *ka ryoo lah*, was as follows:—The two disputants in a case would each of them fix a spear under water in some deep pool. They would then dive and catch hold of the spear. The man who remained longest under water without returning to the surface was adjudged by the Siem and durbar to have won the case. Colonel Maxwell, late Superintendent of the Manipur State, witnessed a similar ordeal in the Manipur State in the year 1882, when two Manipuris dived to the bottom of a river and held on to stones, the result being that one man, who remained under water in the most determined way, was very nearly drowned. Amongst the Khasis sometimes the supporters of the contending parties used to compel the divers to remain under water by holding them down with their spears. Another form of trial was to place two pots, each of them containing a piece of gold and a piece of silver wrapped up in cloths, in shallow water. The two contending parties

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The above and other similar sacrifices to the gods of the State or divisions of the State may be said to be the communal religious duties of the *Lyngdohs*. The duties of *Lyngdohs* with reference to private persons may now be mentioned. When it is found that any two people have made an incestuous marriage, that is to say a marriage within the exogamous group of the *kur*, or clan, the parties at fault are taken before the *Lyngdoh* by their clansmen, who request him to sacrifice in order to ward off the injurious effects of the *seng* or taboo, of such a connection from the kindred. On this occasion a pig is sacrificed to the *Lyngdoh* and a goat to the *lei long ruj*. The parties at fault are then entertained. As mentioned in another place, the sin of incest admits of no expiation for the offenders themselves. In the Khyrim State, it is said by the *Lyngdohs* themselves, although not by the Sirdar or the myntries, that they are the customary legatees of all the persons who die without leaving female heirs (*sey dak*). In other States such property passes to the Sirdar. The *Lyngdoh* of Nongkrem can also take possession of the property of persons who have been found to harbour an evil spirit (*jiengbih*) in their houses. It appears that in such cases the house and furniture are burnt, as in the case of the *Tarah* superstition in the Jaintia Hills, the *Lyngdoh*, however, taking possession of jewellery or anything else of value. The only practical service the *Lyngdoh* renders in return is to build the afflicted person a new house; unless, indeed, we take into account the casting forth of the devil by the *Lyngdoh*. Mr. Jenkins, of Shangpung, in the Jaintia Hills, writes: "Such is the belief of the people in the evil spirits, that they are completely under the influence of the priests and spend large sums of money in order to secure their favour. They live in constant dread lest by the least transgression or omission they should offend these avaricious men and so bring upon themselves the wrath of the demons." The influence of the *Lyngdohs* over the people in the Jaintia Hills seems to be stronger than in the Khasi Hills. For instance, it came to my notice in Ialiong that crops cannot be cut until the *Lyngdoh* has seen them, in other words, until the *Lyngdoh* has claimed and obtained his share of the produce. In many places, however, in the Khasi Hills the *Lyngdoh* is much dis-
[illegible] owing, no doubt, to the advance of Christianity
[illegible]

For the species to increase and continue he says, Hano—

The mother to bear and give birth—	—	The son of others	The want he win kha (Father's sister)	Is Is

For the house to continue and the world to remain he says, Hano—

The want ha win kha (Father's sister)	—	The wa u khun kha (son of brother of ha win tha)	The remin ha kabha (daughter of ha win kha) ha (Father's sister)	Ha Ha

For the persons (regions) to crystalise, and the stations (systems) to remain he says, Hano—

Father's mother (ha kwai kha) —	The wa u khun kha (son of brother of ha win kha, who is grandson of ha kwai kha (Father's mother)	The remin ha para kha (daughter of Father's brother)	Ha Ha

The Khasi knows the 'sang' (curse, sacred, that which is forbidden as sacred). He has experimented and therefore he says *ka sang iap* (lit., that which is 'sacred' or forbidden or taboo unto death) in the case of those who committed incest in the same *jaid*, kind, species, that is, those of the a group. It is sacrilege. There is no greater punishment than for this sin,—a punishment so severe that the Khasi will not permit the bones of these transgressors to enter the family cairn. Similarly they regard as an act of sacrilege for children of brothers (*shi para kha*) to inter-marry. Thus the Khasi regards as 'sacred', that is, forbidden or tabooed, for those who are sprung of or connected through the same womb, and for those who are generated of and are suspended from or strung to one umbilical cord in origin, to marry. That is they regard as *sang* for the a+b man – woman group to marry the *b* son. [see Tables (1) & (2)].

13: Nkasa E-9 (1953-1954) 1967 AR? Khasi AR?

of marriages between these two *kur*. Such marriage arrangements cannot be regarded as constituting a cross-cousin institution. From my data of four villages it was not possible to produce any institutionalized pattern.

In general, the selection of a marital partner depends mainly on personal choice; though the authority of the *iing* (descent group) and parents should be consulted. The man proposes to the girl. The network of marriage relations among the Khasi seems in no way to follow any set principle. Every marriage is likely to be fortuitous: it is ruled simply by temporary personal liking, except for the strict rule of exogamy and the avoidance of near kin.

Exogamy is strictly kept. In the olden days breaking this rule was equivalent to being sentenced to death. Offenders had their heads shaved in a particular way and had to leave the Khasi community completely. Even now such a marriage is considered as the worst kind of sin; a Khasi Christian intellectual said to me that it was worse than homicide. I came across one couple who had broken this rule. Though they had different *kur* names, both *kur* were segments of one common *kur*. It happened in Jatinga, one of the most modern Khasi communities whose inhabitants were all Christians. The couple were not allowed to have their house inside the village. Their house was in the jungle about one mile away from the village.

Sororate marriage—marriage to a younger sister of the late wife—is practised, since it justifies the widower in remaining in the same household as his children after his wife's death. Otherwise, the Khasi rule demands that he should leave the house and his children in order to remarry another woman. We shall deal with this aspect again in terms of marriage.

II. Principle of Descent and Succession

Previously I have mentioned the *kpoh*, the matrilineal kin group with a common great grandmother. This is not, however, an institutional corporate descent group. The most important functional descent unit is called *iing*. The *iing* is the lowest order of clan segmentation, smaller than the *kpoh*—a *kpoh* may include two or more *iing*. The generation depth of an *iing* is usually two to four, in some cases an *iing* is formed only by mother and child. The Khasi consider this unit to be the most important social index for the classification of individuals. Marriages are arranged by individual *iing*, not by wider groups of kinsmen. The *iing* is the structurally significant norm. The term *iing* is also used for a house building itself, as is the *mɔk* of the Garo. However, the membership of the *iing*, as I shall